

Trooper Horace George Turner and his family



Photograph taken by Dafydd Williams from the 'Find a Grave' website

Horace was born in Dibrugarh, Assam, NE India in 1893 to George Turner, a mining engineer and a director of Assam Railways and Trading Company, and his wife Sarah (née Hollier). George Turner had been sent to India at the age of 28, to open new coal mines, for which concessions had been obtained from the government. The company was also involved in, among other things, timber cutting, saw mills and tea gardens. On their voyage to India George, Sarah and their first born son Walford, together with eighty miners were shipwrecked off the coast of Morocco when their boat ran aground. Eventually the party was taken off and the vessel refloated. The voyage continued without further mishap. George eventually became the appointed agent and general manager of the company in Assam before returning to England after 15 years in India.

Prominent Business Man in Midlands.

The death occurred during the week-end at his residence, Dibru, Augustus-road, Edgbaston, of Mr. George Turner, a prominent figure in business circles. He was in his 74th year.

A native of Dudley, he was by profession a mining engineer, serving his time at the Sandwell Park Colliery, West Bromwich, and when he was 28 he received an appointment under the Assam Railways and Trading Company to open up coal mines in India.

He sailed for Calcutta with 70 or 80 men experienced in various phases of mining work, and on the way out they were shipwrecked off the coast of Morocco.

They all arrived safely, however, and after a few years Mr. Turner rose to be agent and general manager of the company.

On his return home, after spending 15 years in India, he was appointed a director of the company, and on the death of Lord Ribblesdale a few years ago he became chairman.

He became associated with various commercial undertakings, including Messrs. John and Edwin Wright, Ltd., of which firm he was for many years managing director. He was at one time chairman of the Midland Railway Carriage and Wagon Co., Ltd., and for two years he was a director of the board of Messrs. Cammell Laird and Co., Ltd.

He was also a director of the Rivers Steam Navigation Co., the Namdang Tea Co., and the Liverpool, London and Globe Insurance Co. (local board).

He was a member of the Council of the Chamber of Commerce.

A widow and two sons are left to mourn his loss. A third son was killed in 1915 at Suvla Bay.

The interment will take place at Brandwood End on Thursday following a service at St. Augustine's Church.

By 1901 George and Sarah with their three sons, Walford Hollier (b 1881), Horace George and Douglas William (b 1894) had set up home at 72 Holyhead Road, Handsworth, Birmingham assisted by two domestic servants.

By 1911, the family had moved to 'Dibru', 38 Augustus Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham where they remained until George's death in 1929, aged 73.



Obituary of George Turner, Birmingham Daily Gazette, 12th March 1929

BEQUESTS TO HOSPITALS.

GEORGE TURNER (73), of Dibru, Augustus Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, engineer, lately chairman and managing director of the Assam Railways and Trading Co. (Ltd.), chairman of the Midland Railway Carriage and Waggon Co. (Ltd.), and of the Namdang Tea Co. (Ltd.), managing director of Wright's Ropes (Ltd.), a director of Cammell Laird & Co. (Ltd.), the Assam Oil Co. (Ltd.), the London and Liverpool and Globe Insurance Co. (Ltd.), and other concerns (net personalty, £221,095); gross £229,681.

He left £1250 to the Birmingham General Hospital, £1000 each to the West Bromwich District Hospital, the Royal Midland Counties Hospital for Incurables, Leamington, and the Guest Hospital, Dudley, these four bequests being for George and Sarah Turner Beds in the respective hospitals, and are provisional upon him not having given such gifts in his lifetime, and also subject to the condition that the great part of the income of the respective hospitals shall be derived from voluntary contributions; to the Corporation of the City of Birmingham, for the City Art Gallery, his oil painting "Louis Quatorze," by Alfred Elmore, R.A.; £250 upon trust for the augmentation of the benefice of St Augustine, Edgbaston.

George left a sizable estate with many bequests to good causes.



Bequests made by George Turner in his will, *The Scotsman*, 27th July 1929

George's second son, Horace George Turner taken at Repton School in his final year in 1907, aged 18

George's second son, Horace was educated at Repton School, Derbyshire, leaving in 1907. He was described as tall, well built and a good all round sportsman. He played for the Orientals' Hockey Team.

On leaving school, Horace became an articled clerk to a stockbroker. He was the only son still living at home when the 1911 census was taken by which time George and Sarah had moved to 'Dibru', 38 Augustus Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

It is quite likely that Horace joined the Warwickshire Yeomanry as a Territorial after its inception in 1908 when it was brigaded with the Worcester Yeomanry and the Gloucester Hussars to form 1st Midlands Mounted Brigade.

The brigade, including Private Horace G Taylor, No 2244, was called up for service on 11th August 1914 and mustered at Warwick. The following day, the War Office announced that the brigade had volunteered for service abroad. It was decided that in addition to rifles, the men of the regiment would be armed with swords. On 13th and 14th August, the brigade entrained for Bury St Edmunds and came under the command of the Mounted Division.

The brigade moved to Newbury on 31st August 1914 and transferred to 2nd Mounted Division. They encamped on the racecourse at Newbury, Berkshire. It was here, at the end of August that 400 of their horses stampeded through the town. Many of them were injured and others ran for 30 or 40 miles before they were captured.

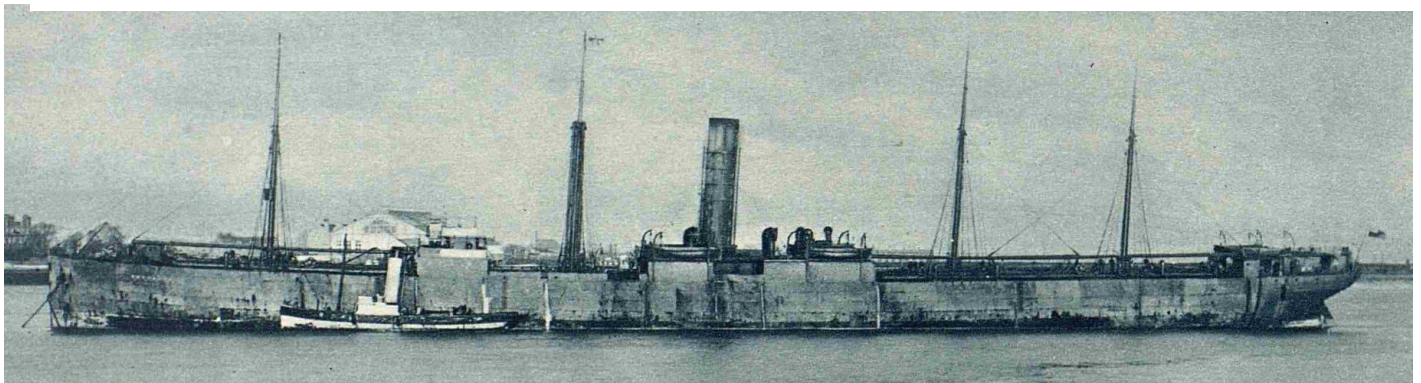
In November 1914 the brigade was on the move again this time to Norfolk, where they completed their training.

On 11th April 1915 the brigade embarked at Avonmouth for Alexandria. The brigade's horse-transport *HMT Wayfarer* was torpedoed 60 miles northwest of the Scilly Isles. The men took to the boats but it was found that the ship was not sinking, so the captain re-boarded her with an officer and 40 men from the Warwicks. The 763 horses were standing up to their knees in water but were brought back to Cobh near Cork with the loss of only 3 horses. The main body sailed on the *HMT Saturnia* via Malta to Alexandria without incident arriving on 24th April. The brigade went into camp at Chatby, 2 miles from the docks.

| Name. | Corps. | Rank. | Regtl. No. |
|------------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|
| TURNER | War Yes | PL | 2244 |
| | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Horace G. | | | |

| Medal. | Roll. | Page. | Remarks |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|
| VICTORY | CY/124B | 1333 | Dg W. 30.8.15 |
| BRITISH | do | do | |
| 15 STAR | CY/1/B7 | 530 | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Theatre of War first served in | 3 Egypt. | | |
| Date of entry therein | 24.4.15 | | |

K. 1980.



HMT Wayfarer (His Majesty's Transport)

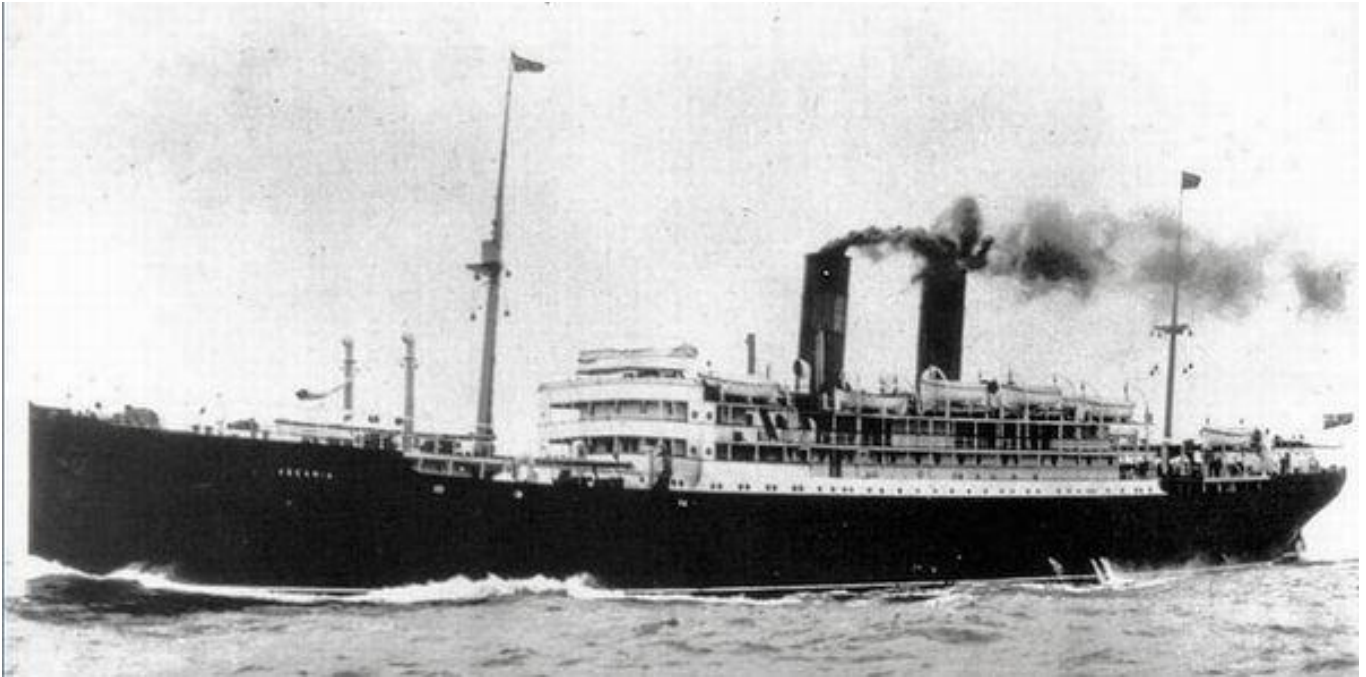
Trooper J. H. Allen, of the Warwickshire Yeomanry, who was one of those on board the *Wayfarer* when it was disabled off the Islands, wrote to his parents in Coventry saying:

"I have to tell you of the exciting time we have gone through and how I almost lost my life by drowning in the Atlantic Ocean. The regiment left Drayton last Thursday afternoon (the letter is dated April 15) for Norwich to entrain for Avonmouth Dock, Bristol, where we arrived about 5 o'clock in the early morning after travelling all night with short rations. We were served out with bully beef and biscuits at 2 o'clock on the day we left Drayton and never had a bit more until 3 o'clock next day. Well, we loaded up the horses, equipment, waggons, fodder etc., on board the SS *Wayfarer* which had been fitted out as a transport. We were carrying roughly a thousand horses and mules and were bound for _____. I must explain that there were about 160 men detailed off to go on this boat, I was one of them. The remainder of the regiment, which is about 500 strong, went the _____. My pal, Tom Werner, and I were the only two Coventry men on board the *Wayfarer*, so we shall have some tales to tell old Coventry when we get back.



HMT Saturnia

The day after their arrival at camp they heard news of the landings at Cape Helles on the Gallipoli peninsula. The Yeomanry brigade remained in Egypt and helped unload wounded ANZAC soldiers from the ships. They did not enter this ill-fated campaign until 13 Aug 1915 when they were issued with webbing equipment to fight as infantry. The brigade embarked on HMHS *Ascania* for Galipolli on 18th August. They then transhipped to *HMS Doris* and from there to lighters and landed on 'A' beach under enemy fire. Along with many other Yeomanry units, 50,000 men got safely ashore.



HMHS Ascania (His Majesty's Hospital Ship)



HMS Doris (His Majesty's Ship)

On 21st August, the Brigade took part in an attack on Hill 70 (Scimitar Hill) acting as dismounted infantry, advancing over two miles under heavy shrapnel fire. The action resulted in 73 casualties (2 officers wounded, 65 other ranks wounded and 6 other ranks killed). The objective was captured and subsequently abandoned as darkness set in because it was impossible to hold in daylight.ⁱ Thereafter the campaign became a stagnant trench-bound stand-off. It was probably during this action that Horace was injured. He died of shrapnel wounds on 29th August 1915 and was buried at Hill 10 cemetery, Gallipoli.ⁱⁱ He was 22 years old.



Hill 10 cemetery, Gallipoli

St. Augustine's (Edgbaston) Parish Magazine announced the death in action of two members of the congregation—Horace George Turner and James Humphries. Turner, who was only 22 years of age, was second son of Mr. George Turner, 38, Augustus-road, one of the churchwardens, and died from shrapnel wounds at the Dardaneiles, where he was serving with the Warwickshire Yeomanry.

Humphries was serving in the King's Royal Rifles, and was killed in action in France. He joined the Army in August, 1914, and rose to the rank of sergeant before going abroad.

Birmingham Daily Gazette, 6th October 1915

News has been received of the death, from shrapnel wounds, received in the Dardanelles, of Horace George Turner, aged 22, the son of Mr. and Mrs. George Turner, Augustus Road, Edgbaston. The deceased, who was a trooper in the Warwickshire Yeomanry, was an old Reptonian. A tall, well-built man, he was a good all-round sportsman, and was a prominent member of the Orientals' Hockey Club.

Birmingham Mail, 11th September 1915



Horace's memorial at plaque at St Augustine's Church, Edgbaston with thanks to Paul Geddes, Parish Secretary

Horace is also commemorated at Repton School and St Augustine's Church, Edgbaston. His parents gave the chancel floor in St. Augustine's Church in memory of their son, and a Memorial plaque was placed on the south wall of the chancel which reads: 'In loving memory of Horace George Turner, who fell at Suvla Bay, 29th August 1915, aged 22'.

Horace is also named on the grave of his parents at Brandwood End cemetery and on the Roll of Honour at Birmingham's Hall of Memory.



The gravestone of Horace's parents, George and Sarah, commemorating also the death of their son Horace at Brandwood End cemetery



Horace's name appears on the 1907 Repton School Memorial for those who left in that year and lost their lives in WW1

Obituary

SIR WALFORD TURNER

The death has occurred at his home in Somerset Road, Edgbaston, of Sir Walford Turner, the prominent Birmingham industrialist and president of Wrights' Ropes Ltd. He was in his 82nd year and leaves a widow and a son.

Sir Walford was knighted in 1962 for political and public services in Birmingham and was High Sheriff of Warwickshire in that year.

The funeral service will be held at Edgbaston Old Church at 12 noon on Monday, and will be followed by interment at Brandwood End Cemetery.

Walford Hollier Turner was born at West Bromwich in 1881. His life began eventfully. His father, a mining engineer, went out to open up coal mines in Assam, but the vessel in which he and his wife and few-months-old baby were travelling ran aground off the coast of Morocco. Eventually the party was taken off and the vessel refloated. The first eight years of Walford Turner's life were spent in Assam; when he returned to this country he was educated at Wolverhampton and King Edward's School, Birmingham.

Chairmanships

On leaving school he embarked on his successful career in commerce and industry. He went to Wrights' Ropes in 1900 and 34 years later was appointed chairman.

He held this appointment until 1967, when he became president. To mark the completion of 50 years with the firm he was presented, in January, 1950, with a portrait of himself in oils, the work of Mr. David Jagger.

Among Sir Walford Turner's many industrial associations were the chairmanship of W. & T. Avery Ltd., the Rollason Wire Co., Ltd., Parnall and Sons, Ltd. and Avery-Hardoll, Ltd., and directorships of Mitchells and Butlers, Ltd., Wellington Tube Works, Ltd. and Barclays Bank.

In the political sphere he was a keen worker for Birmingham Unionist Association, although he never sought Parliamentary or municipal honours. He was honorary treasurer of the association. He was also



Sir Walford Turner

actively associated with Edgbaston Old Church, having been vice-chairman of the Parochial Church Council and chairman of the Finance Committee. Sir Walford was appointed a magistrate in 1937 and was a commissioner of taxes. Always keenly interested in education, he did notable work as a member of the Council and the Finance Committee of Birmingham University.

Golden Wedding

During the war he was for a period West Midlands Regional Controller of the Ministry of Supply.

After leaving school at 16, he spent three years in the old red-coated Volunteer Reserve, forerunner of the Territorial Army. He was a considerable hockey player in his day and was a keen golfer, a yachtsman and an excellent shot.

Sir Walford married Miss Elsie Rose Walsh, daughter of Mr. John Walsh. They celebrated their golden wedding in 1956. Their only son, Mr. C. J. W. Turner, became managing director of Wrights' Ropes Ltd.

Horace's elder brother Walford Hollier Turner, was educated at Wolverhampton and King Edward School, Birmingham.

After leaving school at 16 he spent three years in the Volunteer Reserve, forerunner of the Territorial Army.

He was a very good hockey player and a keen golfer, yachtsman and an excellent shot.

On leaving school in 1900, he started work at Wright's Ropes Ltd and became its chairman 34 years later. He held this appointment until 1957 when he became its president.

In 1909, Walford married Elsie Rose Walsh. They had one child, a son, George John Walford Turner on 14th October 1910.

In 1937, Walford was appointed a magistrate and was a commissioner of taxes. From 1937 he was also the Guardian of the Standard of Wrought Plate in Birmingham.

He was keenly interested in education and did notable work as a member of Birmingham University Council (1942 - 1956) and the Finance Committee from 1944-56.

In 1951-52 Walford was High Sheriff of Warwickshire. Later in 1952, Walford was knighted for Political and Public Service in Birmingham.

Among his many industrial associations were the chairmanship of Rollason Wire

Portrait of Sir Walford Hollier Turner (1881-1962), President of Wright's Ropes Ltd by Elliott & Fry, bromide print, taken on 11th May 1951 held at the National Portrait Gallery London, superimposed upon his obituary in the Birmingham Daily Post, 10th August 1962

Company Ltd, W. T. Avery Ltd, Avery-Hardoll, Parnall and Sons Ltd and directorships of Mitchell and Butlers Ltd, Wellington Tube Works Ltd and the Birmingham local board of Barclays Bank.

In the political sphere Walford was a keen worker for Birmingham Unionist Association and its honorary treasurer.

Walford was actively associated with Edgbaston Old Church and was Vice-President of the Parochial Parish Council.

Sir Walford Hollier Turner died in 1962, aged 81.



Walford's son, George John Walford Turner, served with the Royal Armoured Corps in Egypt and Libya in WW2. He was awarded an MC in 1943. By the end of the war George had attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

George settled back into civilian life and became the director of Wrights Ropes Ltd. In 1957 he served a one year term as High Sheriff of Warwickshire. He died in 1997

Mr. Justice Lloyd Jones, preceded by the High Sheriff of Warwickshire, Lt.-Col. George John Walford Turner, walking to St. Mary's Church, Warwick, to-day, for the service which preceded the opening of Warwick Assizes. (See Page 10.)

(Above left) Coventry Evening Telegraph, 26th November 1957



(Above right) George's son, Andrew on the occasion of his engagement to miss Caroline Fichards in 1968 Birmingham Daily Post. 14th February 1968

Horace's younger brother, Douglas William Turner, also went to Repton School and after leaving school became an assistant manager of works. He enlisted in the 2/1 Royal Warwickshire Yeomanry as a Private, No 1633, on 11th November 1914, aged nineteen. Like his brother he was tall standing at 5' 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". He remained at home training but was discharged when he was pronounced physically unfit for duty in 1915 due to a chronic medical condition.

Businessman leaves cash to servants

A Midland businessman who gave a fortune to charity in his lifetime has remembered his housekeeper and gardener with substantial bequests in his £600,000 will.

Mr. Douglas William Turner, of Woodbourne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, former chairman and managing director of Wellington Tubes, Tipton, now known as Gibbons of Dudley, and a life governor of Birmingham University, left £597,574 (£584,151 net).

He died in September, aged 82, and left £10,000 and an annuity of £500 to his cook-housekeeper, Mrs. R. Henderson, and £4,000 to his gardener, Mr. Joseph H. Gwilt.

(Above) Newspaper cutting from *Birmingham Daily Post*, 18th November 1977

(Right) An interesting piece of Moseley planning history, in which Douglas gave evidence against a house at 68 Wake Green Road being turned into eight flats.

Researched and written by Edwina Rees, Moseley Society History Group

Douglas resided at 'Home Lea', 6 St Agnes Road, Moseley, Birmingham. He went on to become the chairman and managing director of the Wellington Tube Works in West Bromwich (now known as Gibbons of Dudley) and a life governor of Birmingham University. Douglas later moved to Woodbourne Road, Edgbaston where he died in September 1977, aged 82. He left an estate of £600,000.

He left a generous £10,000 and an annuity of £500 to his cook/housekeeper, Mrs Henderson. He also left £14,000 to his gardener, Mr Joseph Gwilt.

Flats for Road "Once Very Exclusive"

RESIDENTS FAIL TO SECURE BAN

THE proposed transformation of a house at 68, Wake Green-road, Moseley, into eight flats led to an objection which was heard by Birmingham magistrates (Messrs. Keep and Willis) yesterday.

After a lengthy hearing the objection was dismissed.

The objector was Mrs. W. T. Brewer, who lives next door, at 70, Wake Green-road.

CHANGING TIMES

Mr. John Wylie, appearing for Modern Mansions Estates, Ltd., Paradise-street, Birmingham, who proposed to construct the flats, said there was nothing in the scheme which would be detrimental to the amenities of the district.

There would be little alteration of the present frontage and it would have a good elevation.

The rentals would average £200 a year, so they were not going to get a class of tenant who went flying about the country looking for a cheap residence.

That rental would include service, central heating and the use of garden and garage.

"There is no doubt," he continued, "that in the past this was a very good residential road."

"One might say it was a very exclusive residential road, but its character is changing very rapidly."

"Indeed, every road which contains a number of these large houses is changing character."

"They have got to change with the times."

"One may regret it, but there it is."

"People are not going in for them, and in Birmingham we are now getting to the stage where people are beginning to appreciate the value of flats."

LESS PRIVACY ALLEGED

Mr. Colin Coley, who appeared for the objector, said there were other residents in the neighbourhood who were in opposition to the scheme.

He denied that this part of Wake Green-road was changing, and argued that values were bound to depreciate if they erected on this site a building that would bring 30 or more people into this house.

"There are other places," Mr. Coley urged "where they could put flats instead of coming into one of the most strictly regulated areas in the city."

William T. Brewer, husband of the objector, said the proposed scheme would obstruct their light and affect the privacy of their garden.

"We should have people always

overlooking into our bedrooms," he added.

Other evidence in opposition to the scheme was given by Douglas William Turner, of 6, St. Agnes-road, "just round the corner."

William A. Church, of 66, Wake Green-road, said the scheme would depreciate his property because the building would not be up to the standard of his.

£4,000 HOUSE

There was laughter in court when this witness, after saying that he had paid £3,000 for his house and had spent another £1,000 on it, added, "And it's the first house I have ever lived in that I liked—or, I had better say, that my wife liked!"

Ernest Guy Bigwood, auctioneer and valuer, said it would be a well-designed block of flats, and the intention was that they would be occupied by a good class of tenants.

A great deal of money was going to be spent.

Mr. Coley: Do you know any similar district of Birmingham in which a similar proposal has been made.—No.

Alfred J. Wilson, who said he had had 40 years experience in valuing and selling and letting all classes of property in Birmingham, said he had seen Wake Green-road change from a suburban residential road to an arterial road serving the newer suburbs of the city.

"In my younger days it would have been regarded as sacrilege to put a bus service on Wake Green-road," he added.

BRAGGING BEGGAR

Described Himself as "Brainy and Witty"

When Thomas Samuel Salter, of 84, Oval-road, Erdington, pleaded guilty at Sutton Coldfield yesterday to begging alms and stealing an electric bicycle lamp, value 4s. 6d., in Greenhill-road, Sutton Coldfield, he asked the Bench to give him another chance.

Supt. Horseman said that he had received a bad report about the defendant, and the Magistrates' Clerk expressed the view that Salter was lazy.

When questioned why he left his last position, defendant said: "I am intelligent, brainy, and witty, but I just can't get on."

Salter admitted other charges of stealing milk, and asked for these to be taken into consideration.

The Bench bound him over for 12 months.

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Illustrations

HMT Saturnia. From the collection of Brigadier-General Gardener

<https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/238771-hmt-saturnia/>

SS Wayfarer and Trooper J H Allen's account of the torpedoing is on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/221573091544544/photos/the-troopship-wayfarer-was-torpedoed-on-11th-april-1915-by-u32-damaged-it-was-to/797177030650811/>

HMHS Ascania

https://birtwistlewiki.com.au/wiki/HMHS_Ascania

Suvla Bay map for 21st August 1915

<http://www.dublin-fusiliers.com/battaliions/1-batt/campaigns/gallipoli/chocolate-hill-map.jpg>

HMS Doris

<https://dawlishchronicles.com/2017/12/08/raids-hms-doris-december-1914/>

Memorial Plaque, St Augustine's Church with thanks to Paul Geddes, Parish Councillor

Sir Walford Hollier Turner, National Portrait Gallery

<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp80922/sir-walford-hollier-turner>

Repton School WW1 Memorial

<http://www.ww1-yorkshires.org.uk/html-files/repton-school.htm>

Obituary for Douglas William Turner, *Birmingham Post*, 18th November 1977

References

- i Roll of Honour, St Augustine's Church, Edgbaston, Birmingham
http://www.staugustines-Edgbaston.org.uk/docs/guide_war_memorial.pdf
- ii The gravestone of Horace's parents at Brandwood End cemetery records Horace's date of death as 29th August 1915. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission gives the date as 30th August 1915